2:Newcomb E-4, 5 (1951-1952) 1956
NM7 Delaware NM7



## II. THE RECONSTRUCTION OF DELAWARE CULTURE

### *Introduction*

The most recent reconstruction of early historic Delaware culture by Herman[1] failed to use the data made available by Kinietz[2] from the Trowbridge and Cass papers and minimized contemporary ethnographic data. Herman largely ignored modern ethnographic information because it "had combined material gained from different periods of time."[3] Kinietz used the previously unavailable Trowbridge and Cass data, but took little advantage of the other sources. His work also omitted a discussion of religion and some aspects of social organization. This study has utilized most of the source material of both of these investigators, as well as their results, and has in addition used other documentary materials. I have also used modern ethnographic data more extensively than have others. By using proper controls the ethnography of the Delawares can be made to cast valuable light on some of the less well-illuminated aspects of the early historic culture. The presence of a culture trait, whose existence could not be traced to white culture, to other Indian cultures, or to some sort of synthesis of these, was assumed to be of Delaware origin. It should be noted that some traits found in the field were considered Delaware on the basis of their absence among other groups; documentary materials later confirmed a Delaware provenance for many of these traits. Evidence from the field indicated, for example, that the Delawares possessed the trait of making a hole at the head of a coffin through which the soul could find its exit. Exit and reentrance were eased by the application of red ocher to this aperture. No evidence could be found which would indicate that this trait had been borrowed from other Indian cultures, nor was it derived from white culture, except that wooden coffins were used in place of bark receptacles. Later research substantiated the conclusion that this trait was of Delaware origin. In brief, by using a cautious and judicious approach it is possible to project ethnographic data back to early historic times with a fair degree of probability. Wherever this approach has been utilized, it is so noted in the text. I have also made a more serious effort to reconstruct the kinship terminology and general kinship structure of the early historic Delawares than has been attempted previously. This reconstruction is based mainly upon the recent suggestions of Murdock.[4]

The authorities for the data are given in chronological order, the seventeenth-century sources are given first, then the eighteenth-century, and so on down to the data recorded by myself in the field. When data secured from informants is used, the initials of the informant appear in the text or in a footnote with other references.[5] A discussion of the documentary sources is given in the Appendix.

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[1] Herman, 1950, pp. 45-77.
[2] Kinietz, 1946.
[3] Herman, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
[4] Murdock, 1949, pp. 184-250, 323-53.
[5] Initials of informants are: O. A., Ollie Beaver Anderson; M. B., Mary Bob; N. D., Lenora Dean; J. T., Jim Thompson; F. W., Fred Washington; R. W., Reuben Wilson; L. F., Lillian Frenchman.

2:Newcomb E-4, 5 (1951-1952) 1956
NM7 Delaware NM7

## APPENDIX: THE SOURCE MATERIALS

The accuracy of the reconstruction of Delaware culture and the description of its change depend largely upon the trustworthiness of the source materials. The quantity and quality of the documents relating to the Delawares are relatively satisfactory. In the seventeenth century alone eleven individuals of four nationalities were eyewitness reporters of various aspects of native life. The extent to which these accounts agree with one another is reassuring. Most disagreements may be reconciled either as real differences present among the diverse Delawaran peoples, or as honest differences of opinion about customs observed.

Peter Lindestrom, Daniel Denton, and William Penn were the most important of the seventeenth-century sources in the quantity of ethnographic data their accounts contained. Lindestrom, a Swedish engineer and mathematician, came to New Sweden in 1653 and remained in the New World for two years. As an engineer and clerk of the court, he traveled extensively and had ample opportunity to observe and learn about native life, as is shown by his *Geographia Americae*, which was not published until 1691. He had, however, made notes or kept a journal while in the New World. His description of native life is, so far as I can judge, completely trustworthy.

Daniel Denton was among the first settlers in the township of Jamaica in 1656. His observations about the natives seem to be confined to inhabitants of western Long Island. It is possible that these Indians may have been Montauk rather than a Unami division, but if this is so they were culturally indistinguishable from the natives described by Lindestrom, Penn, and others. I have utilized Denton's *A Brief Description of New York* fully; it is not as complete an ethnography as Lindestrom's, but its quality is high, and Denton seems to have abided by his statement: "I...have writ nothing but what I have been an eyewitness to...."[1]

William Penn's relatively complete description of Delawaran peoples dates from 1682 or 1683. His letter to the "Committee of the Free Society of Traders" was written after an extensive tour of his lands during which time he had many discussions with the natives about land matters. Some of Penn's statements were probably not derived from firsthand information, but his account agrees tolerably well with others of the late seventeenth century.

The descriptions of Delawaran peoples by Robert Juet and Isaack de Rasieres are the earliest of which I have knowledge. Juet was an officer aboard Henry Hudson's "Half-Moon." Juet's "The Third Voyage of Master Henry Hudson" was written before he sailed on Hudson's fourth voyage in 1610. His knowledge of the natives was superficial, but the very early date of his observations provides useful knowledge of early contacts with Europeans. Isaack de Rasieres' letter was written before the third

[1]Denton, 1845, Preface.

2;Newcomb E-4, 5 (1951-1952) 1956
NM7 Delaware NM7



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decade of the century; unfortunately for Delaware ethnography, sixteen crucial pages are missing. Despite this lack, De Rasieres shows surprising familiarity with marriage customs and government. When he depended upon secondhand information, however, his account is far less creditable. Johan de Laet's material dealing with the Delawares also dated from the first quarter of the seventeenth century. De Laet never visited America, but I used his data because he explicitly attempted to accurately describe native life and because he quoted extracts from the lost journal of Henry Hudson. He was also the first European to set down a vocabulary of the Delaware and Munsi languages. The fourth native of the Netherlands to write of the Delawares was David Pietersz De Vries. His observations were made in 1632 and 1633, and upon his return to Europe he published a book written from his journal. Myers has said that "he writes in a plain but vivid style and his book both internally and externally has well stood the tests of trustworthiness."[2] He was sympathetic towards the natives and has provided much valuable information. Adriaen Van der Donck, another native of Holland, wrote of the natives of New Netherland about the middle of the century. His description of the people is good, but the usable material is brief. Jaspar Dankers (or Danckaerts) and Peter Sluyter, in their journal kept between 1679 and 1680, contributed a small amount of information, chiefly about the religion and folklore of the natives.

The only German among the seventeenth-century writers was Francis Daniel Pastorius, a lawyer and scholar. His knowledge of the natives was limited, but what he did say about them I have found to be of value. His observations dated from 1683 to the close of the century. Gabriel Thomas, a Quaker by birth, was with the first group of Penn's emigrants. His account of Pennsylvania and "West New-Jersey" was published in 1698, but records events of almost two decades earlier. Myers said that Thomas had "a tendency to exaggerate in some of the passages; these lapses, however, are easily discernible. Where he writes what he himself knows he is in general reliable...."[3] His observations upon native life fit in fairly well with other accounts, although he had the unfortunate habit of lumping all Indians together as far as their customs were concerned. Other information about the early seventeenth-century Delawares was obtained from the reliable data found in Thomas Campanius Holm's *A Short Description of the Province of New Sweden*, and also in Amandus Johnson's summary of the information given by other Swedish writers about the Delawares.

In the first part of the eighteenth century David Brainerd, a religious zealot, provided some insights into religious customs, but little more. Peter Kalm, the great Swedish scientist, was in North America between 1748 and 1751 and has given a little information about the Delawares, chiefly ethnobotanical. By far the most important sources of information about them in the eighteenth century were David Zeisberger and

[2] Myers, 1912, p. 5.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

2:Newcomb E-4, 5 (1951-1952) 1956
NM7 Delaware NM7



John Heckewelder, both Moravian missionaries to the Delawares. They lived with the Delawares many years (in Zeisberger's case for more than fifty) and learned their language. Zeisberger was perhaps more ethnocentric and biased in his attitudes about the Delawares, although he viewed them more realistically than did Heckewelder. Heckewelder was more sympathetic towards them, but had a somewhat more romanticized conception of them than did Zeisberger. Neither man gave much information on religion, but in other respects they seem to have understood and written about the Delawares in a relatively thorough manner, considering the time and their occupations. Since they lived among the Delawares at a time when the culture was changing rapidly, their journals are valuable both for their ethnographic content and for the information they provide on culture change. A number of other sources of information concerning the eighteenth-century Delawares were used, but they were mostly minor, and are not discussed here.

Three nineteenth-century sources of information which I have used extensively deserve some comment: the diary of Abraham Luckenbach, another Moravian missionary, the journal of Lewis Henry Morgan, and the manuscript by Charles C. Trowbridge. Luckenbach maintained a mission to the Delawares on the White River in Indiana between 1801 and 1806. He was the best ethnographer of all the Moravians in terms of his interest in the native culture. He was also, as far as I can determine, the only white person ever to view and describe the Big House Ceremony.

Dr. Leslie A. White very kindly loaned me a copy of the unpublished "Journal of a Visit to Kansas and Nebraska in May and June, 1859, Number IV," by Lewis Henry Morgan. This journal contains many interesting insights into the condition of Delaware culture in 1859. Comments are unnecessary on the utility and validity of this journal and upon the other information supplied by the father of American ethnography.

Charles C. Trowbridge was employed by Lewis Cass, Governor of Michigan Territory, to obtain answers to a pamphlet he had prepared entitled "Inquiries respecting the History, Traditions, Languages, Manners, Customs, Religion, Etc. of the Indians, Living within the United States." Trowbridge wrote a thirty-seven page manuscript, two copies of which with different titles are in the Michigan Historical Collections. Trowbridge gained the information for this work in 1824 on the White River. I have used this account fully, and have utilized Kinietz's passages relating to other manuscripts fostered by Cass.[4]

[4] Kinietz, 1946, pp. 15-18.

# A RECONSTRUCTION OF ABORIGINAL DELAWARE CULTURE FROM CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

Mary W. Herman

## INTRODUCTION

Because of the early date at which the east coast tribes came into contact with Europeans and the scarcity of records which in most cases remain from that period, little is known about the culture of those tribes. It is therefore particularly fortunate that several early accounts of Delaware culture have been preserved, making possible a fairly complete and reliable reconstruction of at least one culture from this general area.

Information regarding the culture of the Delaware Indians at the time of contact with European civilizations is limited to records written by Europeans during the seventeenth century, and to a limited extent, those written during the eighteenth century when recollections of earlier days were still reasonably fresh and reliable. The reconstruction of a culture from such sources requires more than a mere compilation of material as there is much of a contradictory and obscure nature contained in the records. The following paper represents a systematization and critical analysis of the material in an effort to present as full and accurate a picture of the culture as the facts allow.

The two most important sources of Delaware ethnography in the early contact period are William Penn and Peter Lindstrom. Lindstrom was born in Stockholm in 1632. He studied at the University of Upsala where he specialized in mathematics and the arts of fortification. He came to the Swedish colony in the New World in 1653 under the unofficial sponsorship of the Swedish government, with the rank of an officer but with no salary. Later he became Engineer and Clerk of Court, and his duties in that position consisted in traveling throughout New Sweden making maps and sketches. In this way, he had excellent opportunities for observing the natives, who were still within close range of the Swedish settlements. Lindstrom left New Sweden in 1655. Although he did not write the Geographia until 1691, its close similarity to the report which he gave to the Swedish Crown shortly after his return has led Amandus Johnson to the opinion that he had made substantial notes at the time he was in this country. His work where it represents the actual observations of the author appears to be completely trustworthy, in spite of the fact that many of his premises and interpretations would be unacceptable today (Lindstrom, introd. by Johnson).

William Penn first arrived in America in 1682. Shortly after his arrival, he made an extensive tour of his dominions and dealt

6:Harrington E-5 (1907-1910) 1921
NM7 Delaware NM7
Lenape



115 The writer has gathered most of his data for the whole series from the Oklahoma bands, with such informants as Chief Charley Elkhair (Kokŭlŭpo'w''e), Julius Fox, or Fouts (Peta'nlhink), Minnie Fox (Wemĕĕle'xkwĕ) his wife, and William Brown; but much valuable information came from Canada where his principal informants were Chief James Wolf ('Tayeno'xwan), Chief Nellis F. Timothy, (Tomapemihi'lat), Isaac Monture (Ka'pyŭ'hŭm), Chief Nellis Monture, Michael Anthony (Na'nkŭma'oxa), and Monroe Pheasant. Of these especial credit is due to Julius Fox and Chief Timothy, both of whom manifested great interest in the work and exerted every effort to make it complete, and to Ernest Spybuck, a Shawnee, whose paintings, carefully made of Delaware ceremonies at the writer's request, form a valuable adjunct to the text.

• 127 The works of previous writers have been utilized where available, and much has been learned from archeological discoveries in the ancient territory of the

6:Harrington E-5 (1907-1910)1921
NM7 Delaware NM7
Lenape



Lenape, not so much, of course, with regard to the subject matter of the present paper, as of others in preparation. 127

Most of the information was gathered while the writer was collecting ethnological specimens for the Heye Museum of New York, now the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, during the years 1907 to 1910; but some of the Canadian data were procured earlier while in the field for Mr E. T. Tefft of New York, whose collection is now in the American Museum of Natural History. 114

Without knowledgeof the Delaware language in its divergent dialects, and without any pretension of being a philologist, the writer has endeavored to record the Lenapewords as he heard them,depending for translation on his interpreter *pro tem.* Hence some inaccuracies at least are inevitable. The alphabet used is as follows: 104

| VOWELS | CONSONANTS |
|---|---|
| *a* as in arch. | *c* like English sh. |
| *ă* as in cat. | ' a slight aspirate. |
| *â* as in fall. | ⁿ gives the preceding vowel a nasal sound. |
| *ai* as in aisle. | |

154 rein these are the more violent."[51] Warfare
[721] provided a socially approved way of bleeding off some of these aggressions, for the warriors; and the institution of torture
154 gave the rest of the community a similar
727 opportunity. "The Indians flock to these executions as to some great solemnity, with a view to reeking on the unfortunate captive their cruel and revengeful dis-
154 position."[52] The institution of blood-
627 revenge[53] (which sometimes led to prolonged vendetta) was also an outlet for aggression; but the fear of its exercise no doubt served also to inhibit it. In
154 hunting, males could work off aggression
224 on animals, which were conceptualized as quasi-human. It is worth noting that among women, who had a more restricted childhood and who at the same time had
154 fewer socially sanctioned outlets for
521 aggression, the overflow dribbled off in
562 unpleasant gossip and slander, which the men, who had other means of catharsis, professed to scorn.[54]

154 All observers agreed that liquor dis-
273 solved the inhibitions against aggression.
578 "The effects which intoxication produces upon the Indians are dreadful," lamented Heckewelder. "It has been the cause of an infinite number of murders among them, besides biting off noses and otherwise disfiguring each other, which are the least consequences of the quarrels which inebriation produces between them."[55] As might be expected, therefore, Indian spokesmen frequently—and in vain—implored the whites to cease bringing liquor into their settlements.

## Summary

● 127 From an examination of the early ethnological literature concerning the Delaware Indians, we have been able to discover some of their psychological
855 characteristics. The Delawares would seem in general to have been a people among whom the children grew up

51. Zeisberger, 1778, pp. 124-125.
52. Zeisberger, 1778, pp. 106-107.
53. Penn, 1683.
54. Zeisberger, 1778, p. 116.
55. Heckewelder, 1819, p. 263.

[P.10, B]

121 zon in order that Minsi material may be separated from artifacts pertaining to earlier occupations. The writer herewith presents what he considers to be a reasonably valid list of elements pertaining to Minsi material culture. This list cannot in the light of our present knowledge pretend to anything approaching final inclusiveness or conclusiveness. It is the 1951 model and all rights to make subsequent changes are reserved.

• 127 In this list I have, of course, leaned heavily upon Ritchie's Bell-Philhower report as well as my own researches both prior to and following the Bell-Philhower "dig". I would also like to acknowledge much valuable assistance derived from access to the splendid collection of material from Minisink Island in the collection of Mr. Rudolph Ludwig, Milford, Pa.

## Ceramics

*Pipes*

172 So far as the writer has been able to
276 determine, no stone pipes attributable to
323 the Minsi have been found in the upper Delaware area or elsewhere. Pipes of pottery occur, but are not numerous. These pottery pipes may be tubular, effigy, or obtuse—angle elbow. (Plate 1, No. 2).
[531] Decoration may consist of pointillé, incised lines, corded stick impressions, or may be absent. (Plate 1, Nos. 1 and 3, shows pointillé-decorated pipe sherds.)

*Vessels*

172 Pottery may be of various Owasco types
415 (Castle Creek Epigonus is rather promi
323 nent) with punctuate, corded, platted, and beaded designs of several forms, or of Iroquoian types with incised designs in herringbone and other patterns. Rims often exhibit castellations. (See Plate 2. The sherds in the top row and the sherd at the left in the bottom row exhibit Owasco features. The remainder are primarily Iroquoian in motif.) An excellent description

14: Stewart E-5 (1936-1938)1944 NR13 Northern Paiute
Delaware NM7
Winnebago NP12
Comanche NO6



## APPENDIX II. PEYOTE ELEMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST

The distribution list in this section was first devised upon the basis of experience with Ute peyotism and a study of published literature on the peyote cult generally.[*] The published accounts of the cult, however, did not contain the detailed information necessary to answer all the points raised, and so a blank copy of the list and a request to fill it out were sent to several ethnographers known to have attended peyote meetings. The response was most gratifying, time and knowledge being given freely. The locations of the tribes represented in the element list are indicated on map 2.

### SYMBOLS USED IN THE ELEMENT LIST

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| + | Element present | ( ) | Exactness of data doubtful |
| — | Element absent | R | Recent development |
| Blank | Information lacking | * | Indicates that a note to the element is appended at the end of the list |

### SOURCES AND COLUMN ABBREVIATIONS

The sources for the data in both the list and the notes to the list, and the abbreviations at the heads of columns, are as follows:

13 T: Composite picture of cult of thirteen tribes visited by La Barre and Schultes, mostly in Oklahoma (Kickapoo, Kiowa, Quapaw, Shawnee, Wichita, Caddo, Comanche, Delaware, Osage, Oto, Pawnee, Ponca, Southern Cheyenne). Richard Evans Schultes, Peyote and Plants used in the Peyote Ceremony, HU-BML 4:127–152, 1937, with additions made on list by La Barre, 1938.

K-A: Kiowa-Apache. List filled in and notes supplied by J. Gilbert McAllister from information obtained during ethnographic field work performed 1933–1934 (eleven months) under the sponsorship of the University of Chicago.

Kio: Kiowa. List filled in and notes supplied by Weston La Barre. When returning the list La Barre wrote, "I believe that in peyotism tribal affiliation in this inter-tribal religion is far less important than leadership, i.e., what the particular leader's 'way' is, and from what leader he got his meeting." La Barre did field work in Oklahoma under the auspices of the Laboratory of Anthropology (1935), Yale University, and the American Museum of Natural History.

Com: Comanche in Oklahoma. List filled in and notes supplied by E. Adamson Hoebel.

Kic: Kickapoo in the vicinity of McLoud, Oklahoma. List filled in and notes supplied by John A. Noon, who attended a meeting during the summer of 1932. The Kickapoo leaders recognized that they "followed the Kiowa-Comanche 'way'."

Ab S: Absentee Shawnee of central Oklahoma. List filled in and notes supplied by Erminie W. Voegelin. Meeting attended in 1933. Voegelin reports three forms of the cult among the Absentee: (1) The Kiowa-Comanche form (the form which my list records); said to have been introduced about 1900 from the Kickapoo, who learned it from the Comanche; is the most popular form. (2) Caddo-Delaware variant of the "Wilson way," conducted by Ernest Spybuck. (3) Yuchi "way," conducted by Panther; considered by Voegelin's informants to be distinct from the Kiowa-Comanche version, yet probably only slightly variant. Membership in these forms of the cult does not interfere with participation in older Shawnee religious beliefs and ceremonies. The "Cherokee" or "Loyal" Shawnee in northeastern Oklahoma, however, take peyote "according to the Bible way . . . like those Ioways," which is La Barre's Oto "Christianized" version, and this does teach complete withdrawal from older native ceremonies.

De 1: Kiowa-Comanche type cult among the Delaware. List filled in by James C. Webber (a Delaware informant recommended by Dr. Frank Speck) and supplemented by Petrullo's published account, also principally from Webber.

De 2: "Wilson way" among the Delaware (La Barre's Caddo-Delaware). Abstracted from Petrullo's book, with additional notes supplied by James C. Webber. The list does not adequately bring out the degree of divergence which the cult has attained, which could only be done by devising a list based on the "Wilson way." The altar is greatly changed from the Kiowa-Comanche prototype and at times becomes extremely elaborate (see Petrullo, pls. 3–6).

Win: Winnebago of Nebraska. This is apparently a variant of the "Wilson way," although Alexis A. Praus, who filled in the list and supplied the notes, did not designate it as such. Praus attended

[*] Data for the Ute and Washo–Northern Paiute lists obtained in the field, and additional data on the cults of the Tarahumara, Tepehuan, Lipan Apache, Mescalero Apache, Kiowa, Oto, Delaware, Omaha, Iowa, Arapaho, Winnebago, and Taos from published literature, are part of my Ute Peyotism which has been accepted for publication by Anthropos.